

Finance Manager

Information Pack
January 2012



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Dear candidate,

We are delighted you are interested in learning more about ARK Schools and the role of Finance Manager. This is an exciting opportunity for an ambitious Finance Manager who is looking for a new challenge and has the desire to play an important role within a top performing academy group.

ARK Schools is an education charity established to create a network of outstanding inner-city academies that radically improve the life chances of their pupils. With eleven academies currently open, and many more in development for September 2012 and beyond, we are looking for a Finance Manager to play a key role in ensuring the continued success of ARK Schools as it expands.

The role will involve the direct management of the current Finance Officers, as well as working with, and providing guidance and training for, academy based finance staff. In addition the successful candidate will be heavily involved in the opening of new academies, ensuring that they open with suitably trained staff and network wide systems that ensure accuracy and efficiency in financial operations.

Our ideal candidate will be a professionally qualified accountant with hands on experience of producing accounts to the latest Charities SORP and Companies Act. They will also be an excellent communicator and strong and supportive line manager with the ability to get the best out of their team. Knowledge of educational funding mechanisms and experience of working with local authorities would also be advantageous.

For further information please visit www.arkschools.org . To apply, please go to <https://application.arkschools.net/?r=yNzjLPSp> to upload your CV and covering letter. Applications should be made by no later than **9am on Thursday 9th February**. First round interviews are scheduled to take place on **Thursday 16th February**.

To discuss the role further please contact Holly on 0203 116 0894 / holly.harris@arkonline.org.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Lucy Heller,
Managing Director

About ARK Schools

ARK Schools runs a network of eleven academies in London, Portsmouth and Birmingham. ARK Schools was created in 2004 to work with the Department for Education and local authorities to create new schools offering exceptional opportunities to children in inner cities through the academies programme.

Our aim is to help close the achievement gap between children from disadvantaged and more affluent backgrounds. Our academies focus on raising attainment so that every pupil has a real choice of going on to higher education when they complete school. Our schools are non-selective, community schools for local children. They are non-denominational other than where they replace a school that previously had a religious affiliation. ARK's academies are generally situated in deprived urban areas – just under half of pupils at ARK secondary schools are on free school meals, compared to around 15% nationally.

The ARK Schools Network

| ACADEMY | BOROUGH | OPENED | AGE | OFSTED | |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------------------|---|
| | | | | Predecessor school | Section 5 inspection |
| Burlington Danes | Hammersmith | 2006 | 11-18 | Special measures | Good |
| King Solomon | Westminster | 2007 | 3-18 | New school N/A | Outstanding |
| Walworth | Southwark | 2007 | 11-18 | Satisfactory | Good (with outstanding capacity to improve) |
| Globe | Southwark | 2008 | 3-18 | Special measures | Good (with outstanding capacity to improve) |
| Evelyn Grace | Lambeth | 2008 | 11-18 | New school N/A | Satisfactory |
| Ark | Brent | 2008 | 3-18 | New school N/A | Outstanding |
| Charter | Portsmouth | 2009 | 11-18 | Notice to improve | Good (monitoring visit) |
| St Alban's | Birmingham | 2009 | 11-18 | Good | Outstanding |
| ARK Atwood Primary | Westminster | 2011 | 3 – 11 | New school N/A | Pending |
| ARK Conway Primary | Hammersmith | 2011 | 3 – 11 | New school N/A | Pending |
| ARK Oval Primary | Croydon | 2011 | 3 – 11 | Special Measures | Pending |

New schools: ARK is working with a number of governing bodies on proposals to open new primary academies in and outside London. We expect to open four secondary schools in 2012: Isaac Newton Academy in Redbridge and Bolingbroke Academy in Wandsworth, London, are new schools and Kings Norton High School in Birmingham and Elliott School in Wandsworth, both intend to convert to being ARK sponsored academies.

Our Vision

Our vision is to create a group of outstanding schools that radically improve our pupils' life chances. We want every pupil at an ARK academy to do well enough by the age of 18 to go to university or pursue the career of their choice. To achieve this we prioritise six key principles across our schools:

1. HIGH EXPECTATIONS

We set exceptionally high expectations for all our pupils which we reinforce constantly as they go through school. We believe every child can realise their potential with the right teaching and support.

2. EXEMPLARY BEHAVIOUR

Our schools are characterised by a respectful and orderly environment, where teachers can focus on teaching and pupils on learning.

All our schools aim for uninterrupted teaching and learning to make exceptional achievement possible. We don't accept excuses and we don't make any either.

3. EXCELLENT TEACHING

Nothing is more important than excellent teaching, underpinned by high quality professional development. We make intelligent and appropriate use of data to improve teaching and the curriculum and to ensure that no child is left behind. We draw on evidence and experience of the best ways to achieve excellent outcomes for all children.

4. MORE TIME FOR LEARNING

Our longer school day provides more time to embed core subjects and to extend the curriculum through enrichment. Our curriculum is planned to provide pathways from any level at entry to high achievement at exit.

5. DEPTH BEFORE BREADTH

A strong command of English and mathematics is a vital foundation for the whole curriculum. We prioritise depth before breadth, so that all pupils secure firm foundations in these core subjects as early as possible.

6. SMALL SCHOOLS

ARK academies are organised as small schools so that every pupil knows and is known well by every teacher within their small school. Positive relationships between pupils reinforce a culture of excellent behaviour and commitment to learning.

Achievement to Date

Secondary results

ARK Schools has secured a fifth year of improved GCSE performances across its academies. ARK's five academies with GCSE results achieved an average rise of 11 percentage points over last year. Since each school opened as an ARK academy the average annual increase in pupils achieving five GCSEs at A*-C including English and mathematics is also 11 percentage points.

ARK academies are now outperforming national attainment in the key subjects of English and mathematics. In mathematics, 73% of ARK pupils achieve A*-Cs compared with 59% of pupils nationally. In English 69% of all ARK pupils now achieve A*-C grades, compared with 65% nationally. Overall 61% of our pupils achieved five good GCSEs with English and maths, ahead of the national level of attainment (58%, 2011).

| % pupils passing 5 GCSEs A* - C (including English and Maths) | Opened | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Percentage point increase 2010 - 2011 | Average annual percentage point increase since opening as ARK academy |
|---|--------|------|------|------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Burlington Danes | 2006 | 50 | 67 | 75 | 8 | 9 |
| Walworth | 2007 | 45 | 59 | 70 | 11 | 11 |
| Globe | 2008 | 35 | 42 | 45 | 3 | 6 |
| St Alban's | 2009 | 31* | 50 | 67 | 17 | 19 |
| Charter | 2009 | 21* | 24 | 39 | 15 | 9 |
| Average across ARK Schools | | | | | 11 | 11 |

*Denotes result for predecessor school

Primary results

- At King Solomon, Ark and Globe Academies key stage one pupils achieved results well above local and national averages in every subject in 2011. Despite starting from relatively low baselines, an average of 68% of pupils reached level 2a across their subjects, compared with 43% of pupils in primary schools nationally.
- In Globe Academy 93% of pupils achieved Level 4+ in English and maths - 10% above the national average.
- King Solomon Academy and Ark Academy are both rated as 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

Sixth form results

- More than two thirds of ARK's first Sixth Form cohort, at Burlington Danes Academy, secured places at their first choice university. Students are going to leading institutions including Warwick, Bristol and King's College London.

ARK Schools staff benefits

We are committed to recruiting, developing and supporting excellent staff within the network. Alongside our continued focus on professional development through the Summit, Hub Days and the Training Menu we also offer a variety of other benefits. These benefits have been chosen to help our employees develop professionally, plan their finances and look after their wellbeing.

MA bursary - ARK Schools offers teaching staff the opportunity to further their knowledge and understanding of education through a subsidised part-time MA at King's The MA bursary covers the majority of the circa £4,000 course fee, with teachers expected to contribute just £1,000.

ARK Rewards – ARK Schools has a discount scheme for all employees. Employees can access up to £1,000 in savings a year from over 3,000 major retailers, receive up to 40% discounts at a wide variety of gyms and sign up for a money back healthcare programme.

- **Discounts** – Save up to £1,000 a year through store discount cards, or cashback with online shopping.
- **GymFlex** – Save up to 40% at your local gym.
- **Healthcare** – This low cost plan gives you money back towards the cost of your optical bills, dental costs and consultations.

Interest Free Loans – ARK Schools offers employees up to £5,000 in interest free loans for season ticket or bicycle purchases.

Childcare Vouchers – All employees are eligible for tax free childcare vouchers as part of a salary sacrifice scheme.

International development opportunities – In spring 2011 the mathematics leads from across the network visited Singapore in order to examine and share best practice. There have also been on several other trips this year – the staff from King Solomon Academy visited the best charter schools in New York and the primary leaders from across the network also visited various charter schools in New Orleans.

Suggest a Candidate Scheme – ARK Schools rewards employees for nominating candidates who are successful in being offered (and accepting) a role in an ARK School.

Job Description: Finance Manager

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Reports to: | Head of Finance |
| Start date: | Earliest available opportunity |
| Salary: | £45,000-£50,000 (plus 10% pension contribution) |
| Staff managed: | Finance Officers (x2) |

The Role

To play a key role in ensuring the ongoing success of ARK Schools as it continues to expand. The role will involve the direct management of two current finance officers based in the central team as well as working with, and providing guidance and training to, academy based finance staff

In addition the Finance Manager will be heavily involved in the opening of new academies, ensuring that they open with suitably trained staff and network wide systems that ensure accuracy and efficiency in financial operations. Currently we plan to open up to eight academies in September 2012

Key Responsibilities

Pre-opening for new academies:

- To prepare and submit bids for funding to the DfE for new academy projects, and fulfil all resulting monitoring and claim arrangements accordingly
- To gain first-rate knowledge of the different funding streams and mechanisms in order to provide advice and maximise the budget available for new academies
- To work closely with the projects team and incoming principals to share information and provide regular reports on budgets and funding availability
- For existing school takeovers, to work with all stakeholders on the financial and due diligence aspects of pre-opening
- For brand new academies, to design and manage the new academy budget

Post-opening:

- To continue to provide advice and support to finance staff across the ARK Schools network
- To train new academy finance staff in ARK Schools' specific finance procedures and accounting systems
- To oversee the financial arrangements for all capital projects undertaken by ARK Schools
- To lead on liaising with relevant Local Authorities on matters relating to ARK Schools

Reporting:

- To work with the Head of Finance to produce the statutory accounts of ARK Schools, its trading subsidiary, and ARK UK Programmes, a smaller related charity
- To co-operate with the ARK Schools auditors in the production of audited statutory accounts.
- To assist the Head of Finance in providing up-to-date financial information and technical advice to ARK Schools management and the wider academies network, including cash management
- To maintain and develop the financial systems to meet business needs and network changes
- To liaise with ARK Schools' taxation advisors to ensure the Charities and trading subsidiary are compliant with HMRC requirements
- To take responsibility for the development and maintenance of the financial accounting systems, processes and procedures, as directed by the Head of Finance
- To benchmark our academies financial performance against internal and external metrics

Other

- To ensure that ARK Schools finance team provides an exemplar service to the network
- To ensure appropriate stewardship and accountability for public and charitable funding received
- To undertake any other additional duties, as requested by the Head of Finance

Person Specification: Finance Manager

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- Professional accountancy qualification
- A record of Continuing Professional Development activities
- Right to work in the UK

Knowledge and Experience, Skills and Attributes

- Post qualification experience
- Hands on experience of producing accounts to the latest Charities SORP and Companies Act
- Ideally have experience/ understanding of educational (possibly academy) funding mechanisms
- Ideally experience of working with local authorities (and possibly also the DfE)
- Experience of VAT, ideally in a charity context

Specific Skills

- Highly developed skills in spreadsheet and computerised accountancy software
- Developed communication and training skills
- Strong administration skills and the ability to maintain effective systems

Personal Characteristics

- The ability to write clearly and concisely and to produce and maintain documents
- Adaptable, organised and able to work with minimum supervision
- Strong and supportive manager, capable of getting the best out of a team

Deliverables: criteria/results by which success can be measured

- Quality, timeliness and accuracy of financial records
- Quality of management information and reporting
- Successful opening of new academies, and smooth transition of 'takeover schools', with financial procedures in place
- Audit completed to timetable and clean management letter

Other

- This post is subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure